

State, the fire season in Montana again reminds us that we must be deeply grateful for the hard and dangerous work these firefighters do, work that takes them away from their homes and their families to protect the people of Montana and the West.

Let me honor the four firefighters who lost their lives battling fires in Montana.

On August 31, 2001, three men died in a helicopter crash near the Fridley Fire just south of Livingston, MT. The pilot was Rich Hernandez, 37, originally from Florida. His copilot, Santi Arovitz, only 28, was originally from Spain and had been living in Hillsboro, OR. Their crew chief was Kip Krigbaum, 45, of Emmett, ID.

On September 3, David Ray Rendek, just 24 years old, was killed when struck by a falling snag while working on a small fire in Bitterroot National Forest, near Hamilton, MT.

David graduated from high school in Victor, MT, and attended classes at the University of Montana, in Missoula with his sister. I have been told he was a passionate advocate about the outdoors and was a dedicated firefighter. I am very sorry his family and Montana have lost such a promising young man.

My deepest sympathies and condolences go out to the family and friends of these four men. We in Congress honor their memory and the ultimate sacrifice they made for the people of Montana. We are very sorry for their loss.

Unfortunately, the fires in Montana continue. Dedicated fire crews continue to battle hostile weather conditions and high winds.

Montana fires have consumed over 90,000 acres. The largest fires are the Fridley Fire near Livingston and the Moose Fire burning in and around Glacier National Park.

The Fridley Fire has burned over 26,800 acres, and it is approaching the Gallatin Divide, increasing the threat to the Bozeman water supply. Over 1,000 people are fighting this fire.

As of September 5, the Moose fire has burned more than 58,000 acres. There are 35 20-person crews currently battling the Moose Fire.

Fourteen are Montana crews and several crews come from Montana's Indian Country—the Rosebud Sioux, Ronan, Blackfeet Nation and Northern Cheyenne. Air Support includes 9 helicopters and 3 air tankers. Other Montana crews include: Glacier Park, Bitterroot Hot Shot Crew, Trapper Creek Job Corps, Kootenai National Forest and Flathead National Forest.

The force of the Moose Fire is tremendous, as it burns on Forest Service, private, and Glacier National Park lands. People have reported to me they can smell the smoke as far away as Chester, another even suggested as far away as Minot.

For those listening who may not know those distances, Minot is in North Dakota, 700, 800 miles away.

All of our fire crews are working long days and long hours battling these blazes, and I just can't praise them enough. They have contained several fires and they are winning the struggle with the dangerous Fridley and Moose fires.

Also, our Indian country firefighters are again great heroes on our fire lines in northwest Montana. Although wildfires are devastating, our tribal neighbors continually step up to the plate and meet this challenge full on. I intend to work closely with the tribes to better incorporate them in the National Fire Policy planning process.

I also intend to continue to work hard for funding for fire rehabilitation efforts. Many people tend to forget that the devastating effects of wildfire remain long after the last flame has been put out.

The terrible mudslides that occurred after heavy rains in the Bitterroot National Forest in Montana in June are a sober reminder of that fact. These mudslides destroy property, soil cover, and can devastate watersheds. We must make sure that the appropriate Federal agencies have the resources they need to restore burned areas and to deal with the long-term effects of fire on the ground.

Again, I express my deepest gratitude to all of the men and women who put themselves in harm's way on the fire lines in Montana, and my deepest sorrow and regret that they lost four of their comrades in the line of duty.

I will continue to do everything I can to make sure our crews have the manpower and equipment they need on the ground. The quicker our firefighters can contain these fires, the sooner we can take their lives out of danger.

Mr. President, I appreciate your attention. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEXICAN PROGRESS IN THE DRUG WAR

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I have come to this Chamber because I want to make a few comments of welcome to President Vicente Fox. I had the pleasure of speaking with him at Secretary Powell's lunch yesterday and listening to him in the House of Representatives in the joint session this morning.

Because I have been critical of Mexico's efforts to stop drug trafficking, their unwillingness to arrest cartel leaders, to vigorously prevent the laundering of drug money, their refusal to

extradite a single Mexican national on drugs charges, and because of the widespread corruption within the ranks of Mexican law enforcement, I thought I should come to the Chamber today while President Fox is in our country to say recent reports I have had indicate there has been truly a dramatic change in Mexico.

I believe he is to be commended for that. It looks as if he is responsible for an entirely new attitude on the part of his country in the fight against drugs. I wish to take a few moments to commend him and to say how important this is to the United States and to the people of this country.

We all recognize that we have a demand problem in this country. In fact, there is even a growing demand problem in Mexico today as well. But, nevertheless, the flood of narcotics across the border represents a major problem for both our nations. It brings with it also collateral problems in the United States and in Mexico: violence, corruption, and even, as we have seen, the brutal torture and murder of literally hundreds of public officials, judges, prosecutors, journalists, and any who dare either to cross the cartels or stand in their way.

It is fair to say that these major consequences of the drug trade require that we solve the problem together. Simply put, the Fox administration has made more progress in the war against drugs over the last 6 months than the Government of Mexico made over the previous 9 years.

I would like to share some examples, some specifics, if you will, of the progress made by Mexico through the leadership of this brave new President.

Prior to the Fox administration, not one major Mexican national drug cartel member had ever been extradited to the United States on drug charges—not one, ever—despite a whole list of pending requests.

Since President Fox took office, however, this has changed dramatically. In fact, I had the privilege, at the Davos World Economic Summit, in January, to meet briefly with President Fox. At that time I handed to him directly a list of requested extraditions, prepared by our Drug Enforcement Administration. He said he would take action. I did not really believe him at the time, but he has.

After years of court battles, earlier this year the Mexican Supreme Court ruled that Mexican nationals could, indeed, be extradited to the United States.

Since January, 14 fugitives have been extradited to our country from Mexico. Four of these were Mexican nationals, and three of the four, for the first time, were Mexican nationals extradited on major drug charges. That may not sound like much, but I can assure you it is a big deal, because many of us who